



## **FACT- SHEET**

### **Proposed Home Rule Charter**

#### **Background:**

Cities in the State of Texas are established as either a Special Law, General Law City or a Home Rule Charter City. Special Law and General Law Cities are governed by the rules outlined by the State of Texas. Home Rule Charter Cities have more local autonomy, and are governed by rules established through a local charter approved by voters of the community.

In 1952, the City of Leon Valley was incorporated as a General Law City. On July 14, 2014, the Leon Valley City Council--based on input from citizens--decided to consider the Home Rule Charter governance structure. They appointed a group of prominent and civic-minded citizens to a Home Rule Commission to develop a Home Rule Charter.

The Home Rule Commission consists of the following members: Chairman Arthur "Art" Reyna, Vice Chairman Jack Dean, Commissioner Rudy Garcia, Commissioner Kathy Hill, Commissioner David Jordan, Commissioner Liz Maloy, Commissioner Mike McCarley, Commissioner Darby Riley, Commissioner Victor Rodriguez, Commissioner Manuel Rubio, and Commissioner Al Uietta.

The Commission completed their work on January 7, 2015 and approved a Home Rule Charter for consideration by the residents and citizens of Leon Valley. The election to adopt the proposed Home Rule Charter is planned for Saturday, May 9, 2015.

#### **Current City of Leon Valley Governance Structure:**

- The City of Leon Valley is a General Law City operating under a City Council-Manager form of government.
- The City Council consists of six (6) members - a Mayor and five (5) Councilmembers, all elected at-large and by place.
- The Mayor and City Councilmembers serve two-year terms of office.
- The Mayor serves as the presiding officer at City Council meetings.
- The Mayor votes only in case of a tie.
- There are no term limits for the Mayor or Councilmembers.
- Citizens do not have the power of initiative, referendum or recall.
- The City is limited to the governmental structures and powers specifically granted by state law.
- The City may exercise only those powers that the State of Texas expressly grants to it.

#### **What is a Home Rule Charter?**

- Under the Home Rule structure, a city exercises powers granted by the State of Texas but also has the ability to adopt measures of local importance not specifically authorized by the state.
- Citizens, by local election, determine form and powers of government
  - Form of Government
  - Powers of the City
  - Limitation on powers of the City
  - Terms and Powers of the Mayor and Councilmembers
  - Removal of Elected Mayor and Councilmembers
  - Number of Councilmembers that serve on the City Council
  - The right of citizen petition for a referendum, the power of referendum allows citizens to petition the City Council to repeal a decision already made by the City Council.
  - The right of citizens to petition City Council for initiative to adopt a specific issue of importance to the petitioners.
  - The power of recall allows citizens to petition for the removal of a City Councilmember from office.

## Summary of the Proposed Home Rule Charter:

There are eight (8) Articles in the Proposed Home Rule Charter

- **Article One: Form of Government & Powers**—pertains to the local Form of Government and adopts the City Council-City Manager Form of Government.
  - The City Council serves as the policy board and appoints a City Manager that is responsible to administer the policies adopted by the City Council.
- **Article Two: Boundaries**—pertains to the Boundaries of the City.
  - Provides for the continuation of the existing boundaries of the City of Leon Valley, and process for annexing and releasing of City territory.
- **Article Three: The City Council & Mayor** —provides the general powers and duties of the Mayor and Councilmembers.
  - The City Council will consist of seven (7) members - a Mayor and six (6) Councilmembers.
  - The Mayor and Councilmembers are elected at large and by place.
  - The Mayor and Councilmembers will serve three-year terms.
  - The Mayor shall have the same voting privileges as the Councilmembers.
  - The Mayor will not have veto powers.
  - The Mayor and City Council Members will be subject to term limits as follows:
    - No past, current, or future elected official shall serve, or have served, more than three (3) consecutive terms and no more than five (5) terms during a lifetime.
- **Article Four: Elections** —pertains to City elections and provides information on how to file for office, run-off elections and the regulation of elections.
- **Article Five: Administrative Organization** —refers to the administrative organization of the City and outlines the powers and duties of the City Manager.
- **Article Six: Initiative, Referendum and Recall** —relates to Initiative, Referendum and Recall.
  - Gives residents and citizens of the city the authority to have an initiative, referendum and recall.
  - Outlines the process that citizens have for handling an initiative, referendum and recall issue.
- **Article Seven: General Provisions** —provides general provisions in the charter to establish guidelines for conflicts of interest, disaster clause, future charter review, and settling of claims.
- **Article Eight: Transitional Provisions** —provides guidance to the City on how to transition from our current General Law Status to Home Rule Status.

## Need More Information:

- You can go to [www.leonvalleytexas.gov](http://www.leonvalleytexas.gov) to view a copy of the entire Home Rule Charter online, or;
- Get a copy by contacting City Secretary Sandra Passailaigue at 210-684-1391 or email her at [s.passailaigue@leonvalleytexas.gov](mailto:s.passailaigue@leonvalleytexas.gov).

## Vote

DON'T FORGET TO VOTE ON **SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2015** ON THE BALLOT ISSUE CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HOME RULE CHARTER.

This fact sheet is provided for informational purposes for the voters only, and by law, the City of Leon Valley cannot and does not take a position either in favor of or against this Election issue.